

DRAFT
Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
Meeting Minutes
December 19, 2007

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) was held on Wednesday, December 19, 2007, at the American Legion Department of Virginia Headquarters Building, 1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond Virginia.

Members Present

Vince Burgess, *Commissioner of Veterans Services*
Sam Wilder, *Chairman of JLC, AUSA*
Daniel Boyer, *Vice Chairman of JLC, Veterans of Foreign Wars*
Paul Galanti, *Chairman of Board of Veterans Services*
Richard Rinaldo, *Legion of Valor*
Goodwin Sacra, *Navy Seabee Veterans of America*
John T. Jackson, *Paralyzed Veterans of America*
Thomas Stephen, *Reserve Officers Association*
Norman Jasper, *Military Order of the Purple Heart*
Jim Aucoin, *AMVETS*
Richard Schneider, *Non-Commissioned Officers Association*
John C. Bonnell, Jr., *Marine Corps League*
Jenny Holbert, *Women Marine Association*
David Ellis, *NAUS*
Robert Gray, *American Ex-POWs*

Members Absent

Mason Botts, *Air Force Association*
Michala Smith, *WAVES*
Thomas Snee, *Fleet Reserve Association*
Connie O'Neill, *American Legion*
Kenneth Smith, *Virginia National Guard Association*
Frank Sherman, *Roanoke Valley Veterans Council*
Daniel Miller, *Disabled American Veterans*
John Dozier, *Korean War Veterans Association*

Alternates Present (representing their Veterans Service Organization)

Jeff Platte, *Air Force Association*
Wes Edwards, *MOAA*
Dale Chapman, *American Legion*
David Martinez, *Disabled American Veterans*
James, Jones, *Korean War Veterans Association*
Mary Freeman, *WAVES*
Dan Karnes, *Roanoke Valley Veterans Council*

Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)

Jack Hilgers, *Legion of Valor*

Russell Fenn, Jr., *Marine Corps League*

Philip Stoneman, *AUSA*

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

Don Ferguson, *Office of the Attorney General*

David McGinnis, *Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services*

Tasmyn Childress, *Virginia Department of Veterans Services*

Steven Combs, *Virginia Department of Veterans Services*

Martha Mead, *Virginia Department of Veterans Services*

Judy Reid, *Virginia Department of Veterans Services*

Others Present

Harry Warner, *Virginia War Memorial Education Foundation*

Bill Townsley, *Military Order of the World Wars*

Don Kaiserman, *AUSA*

Bill Leighty, *Stratizon Corp*

Lisa Meunier, *Stratizon Corp*

Charles Gudis, *American Legion*

Zane Clan, *Virginia Veterans Coalition*

James Davis, *Virginia Veterans Coalition*

James Hancock, *Virginia Veterans Coalition*

Others form the Virginia Veterans Coalition

Agenda Packet

- Meeting Agenda
- Draft Minutes of the October 10, 2007 Meeting
- Turbo Vet System
- JLC 2008 Legislative Objectives- Update
- JLC 2008 Legislative Objectives
 - Fully Fund the Department of Veterans Services Budget and Strategic Plan as outlined in Executive Order 19
 - Support the Virginia National Guard
 - Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care
 - Virginia War Memorial Education Wing
 - Tax Relief for 100% Disabled Veterans
 - Provide Tax Relief for Virginia Citizen Soldiers called to Active Duty
 - Permit Virginia Resident Service Members to place a “Freeze: on their Credit Files”
- Virginia’s Wounded Warrior Project- Annual State Fund Estimate
- **JLC – Notional General Assembly Meeting 14 January 2008**
- Comments From the Chairman of VSF
- Summary of DVS Meeting of 28 November 2007

- DVS Proposal to Hold Town Hall Meetings
- Virginia VSO Membership, as represented on the JLC
- Vital Mission- Ending Homelessness Among Veterans
- Interrelationships Between the DVS, BVS, JLC and the VSF
- Commonwealth of Virginia- Executive Biennial Budget 2008-2010
- JLC Members and Alternates Contact List
- Proposed 2008 Meeting Scheduled
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Packet
 - Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center Disc
 - Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center Boucher
 - Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center Press Release
 - Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center Immediate Release
 - About the Memorial Center
 - Time Cover Page for June 4, 2007
 - U.S. News and World Report for June 18, 2007
 - Leadership Roster
 - Timeline

Additional Handouts

- Ride Finders Public Parking Spaces Rates
- Pocket Glossary of the General Assembly
- How A Bill Becomes A Law

Opening and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Sam Wilder called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Paul Galanti led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of VSOs, Quorum Determination, and Introduction of Guests

Mr. Bill Leighty and Lisa Meunier from Startizon were introduced by Chairman Sam Wilder. Startizon is the corporation providing the software for Turbo Vet system. Members of the public introduced him or her self to the council.

Twenty members of the twenty-two member Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) were recorded as being represented (thirteen by a primary member; seven by an alternate member), and a quorum was determined.

Review and Approval of August 8, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Wilder asked the council to review the draft minutes of the October 8, 2007 meeting.

Correction 1: On page two under the agenda packet in the JLC 2008 Legislative Objectives, The draft reads: Virginia Was Memorial Education Wing. It will be changed to read: Virginia War Memorial Education Wing.

Correction 2: On page eleven under Legislative Objectives – Progress to Date, the last paragraph second line reads: Mr. Ellis said that NAUS had positioned itself as "agents of

influence" with the legislators and were available to answer any questions regarding veterans' issues. Will be changed to: Mr. Ellis suggested that the JLC should position itself as "agents of influence" with the legislators and be available to answer any questions regarding veterans' issues.

A **motion** was made by Daniel Boyer, seconded by Jeff Platte, and passed unanimously, to adopt the amended minutes.

JLC 2008 Legislative Objectives

Review of Governors Kaine's Proposed Budget and Legislation Introduced

Led by Steve Combs

Exerts from Governor Kaine's budget proposal for 2008-2010 biennial and amendments to the 2007 Appropriations Act were presented to the council. Mr. Combs compiled pages from the document to give the JLC as an overview of the budget process and as a guide to the budget document.

Fully Fund the DVS Budget and Strategic Plan as Outlined in Executive Order 19

The JLC request was to provide DVS with the resources to accomplish specific recommended objectives.

Item	Budget	Allocation
C-148	\$385,000	maintenance and renovate projects at Virginia Veterans Care Center
C-149	\$11.2 million	Federal construction grant funding for Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery
C-150	\$5.2 million	Increase State support for Sitter Barfoot Veterans Care Center Addition
C-151	\$28.5 million	Increase state support for Hampton Roads Veterans care center in Northern Virginia
C-152	\$28.5 million	Construction of veterans care center in Northern Virginia
C-153		Apply for federal grant funding for preinstall vault liners at state veterans cemeteries

Support the Virginia National Guard

Mr. Combs reported that the Governors budget did not propose any additional budget items that were significant for what the JLC was advocating for.

Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care

Mr. Combs reported that the Governors budget did not propose any additional budget items for the Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care.

Virginia War Memorial Education Wing

Mr. Combs reported that the Virginia War Memorial Education Wing was included in the Caboose Bill which deals with the appropriate acts of the current fiscal year. The War Memorial Education Wing fundraisers were asked to raise an additional \$2,250,000 in private funds. When the \$2.5 million in private funds are available, the State Treasurer will make \$5.7 million available towards the construction of the Virginia War Memorial Education Wing.

Tax relief for 100% disabled veterans

Mr. Combs told the council that getting tax relief for 100% disabled veterans it is not a budget item, but a legislative item. Mr. Combs added that three Bills have been introduced to date by House of Delegate Scott Lingamfelter, by Senator Toddy Puller and by Senator Roscoe Reynolds. Senator Puller and Senator Reynolds Bill address would all service connected veterans with a 100% disability. Delegate Lingamfelter resolution would grant the exception for Tax relief for 100% disabled veterans for combat related injuries only.

Provide Tax Relief for Virginia Citizen Soldiers called to Active Duty

No budget or Legislative initiative for Providing Tax Relief for Virginia Citizen Soldiers called to Active Duty.

Permit Virginia Resident Service Member to place a "Freeze: on their Credit Files

There have been three Bills to date dealing with individuals putting a freezes on their credit files. The Bills apply to all consumer and not just service members.

Mr. Rinaldo asked Mr. Combs to what degree would they be doing with Wounded Warrior program?

Mr. Combs replied that the veterans care centers are long term care facilities that provide a mix of skilled nursing care, altimeters care and assistant living care to its residents. Sitter Barfoot facility will open with nursing care and the altimeters care units. Sitter Barfoot will add assistant living care to the facility at a later date. Virginia's care centers are not mental health facilities, but they are assistant living homes.

Turbo Vet Presentation

Led by Bill Leighty and Lisa Menunier

Mr. Bill Leighty from Startizon introduced himself to the council. Mr. Leighty was on the Board of Veteran Services and resigned, because he thought he could be better utilized, by spending his time working with Startizon on the Turbo Vet project. Mr. Leighty explained that Mr. Galanti, Commissioner Burgess and himself were out at lunch, when Mr. Galanti had the idea about Turbo Tax for veterans. The idea of using the intelligence of Turbo Tax and apply it to veterans benefits.

Mr. Leighty announced that they have received a \$50 thousand grant from the Governors productivity improvement fund and the **Department** matched that. The \$100 thousand was used to develop a proof of concept. The proof of concept for the Turbo Vet system shows that the system has the logic to work.

Mr. Leighty stated that instead of using the form 526 or the 10EZ form the veteran service officers or representatives will assist veterans with using Turbo Vet. Turbo Vet looks at the critical data elements that are needed to obtain the veterans benefits and finds the right forms rather than filling out the forms that are not needed or incorrect. Only 5% of the applications that come in from veteran service organizations, individuals or State veteran representative are ready to rate on the first time they are submitted. Turbo Vet will allow the first time ready rate to be closer to 100% than the current 5%. By using the technology of Turbo Vet 100 days are taken off of the average time it takes a veteran to get his or her benefits. Taking off 100 days means 200 million a year for the Commonwealth, in addition to the benefits that come into the state for veterans. If we can increase by \$2 thousand average benefit that we give a veteran by having a better system, then we can add another \$114 million for veterans of Virginia.

The project is already operating with 70 licenses, because the system is ran off of other company's software. It is Mr. Leighty hope that the system once up and running will be going to other states as well as other veteran service organizations. Startizon is in the process of putting together a meeting of all VSO to make the product available to them as well. Turbo Vet will not replace the VSO but allows them to concentrate on difficult and appeals cases.

Mr. Leighty has been working with the Federal Government and has had a number of meetings on Capital Hill with Veteran Affairs sub-committees. The staff has all been briefed and is supportive of the project. Senator John Warner thought it was great and wanted to know if they were working with the VA. Mr. Leighty replied that they are working with the VA but need help with getting the VA to work with them.

Turbo Vet takes the intelligence of people like Roger Sullivan and puts it into this intelligence user face, and gives every veteran the same service they would get from well informed service officers.

The system is broken down into modules. Right now Phase one is completed which is the proof for concept. With the \$300 thousand from the productivity of improvement fund, we will be able to go to the completion of phase two, which is to have the system up and running for the basic benefit of its self. Phase three will cost \$898 thousand, and each state will be able to make the choice of adding the module or not. The third module will integrate everything that EO 19 has identified the state does with veterans.

Mr. Boyer asked Mr. Leighty if they had the money to complete phase two of Turbo Tax. Mr. Leighty replied that the \$300 will be determined on December 20, 2007. A meeting was held on December 18, 2007. Turbo Vet supporter had some additional questions that they needed answers to. Supporters also wanted to know if they do phase two are they committing their self to phase three. Mr. Leighty told them that they can stop at phase two but they owe it to their veterans to go to implement phase three.

Mr. Rinaldo asked if there are any tax credit in the state that can be used to off set the cost, by telling the folk that want the money that can they donate all or a portion of the money to get some type of advantages.

Mr. Leighty replied that all of the firms that they are partnering with are have been very generous to offer relatively free licenses. Everyone at Startizon is a veteran and are not getting paid. They are doing the project because they believe in the product and want to get it up and running. A lot of the partners are also doing free work.

Mr. Jim Aucoin would like to know how much Turbo Vet will cost the veterans that use the system. Mr. Leighty explained that by law they can not charge veterans to apply for their benefits. If the system goes up on a government site then supporters can not have any advertisement posted. Mr. Leighty would like to make sure that Virginia and the Governor of Virginia get credit for getting this project started.

Chairman Wilder thought that the system would allow veterans to operate the system alone. It seems that the VSO would have to be present with the way Mr. Leighty has explained it.

Mr. Leighty replied that the veterans could do it by themselves. The priority is to help the VSO and the VSR do a better job. If the veterans are allowed to submit there own claims then the technology oversight agency, said that is statewide application and a different level of project and will need to hire a full time program manager.

Mr. **David Martinez or Tom Stephen** asked Mr. Leighty asked if at some point will a security system be in place to keep people from accessing other people files. Mr. Leighty explained that they system will be hosted on a larger system that has all the mandatory requirements of **FOPA and HIPPA**

Mrs. Jenny Holbert would like to know if Turbo Vet is for veterans who are separated or discharged or also open to veteran who are on drill status or active duty. Mr. Leighty explained that the system is only available to separated veterans. They see the value in a system to allow the current active veterans, but would like to concentrate on the separated veterans first.

Mr. Galanti would like to know where they stand with the Meeting in Washington with the committee heads and the committee staff.

Mr. Leighty said that they are waiting to receive a draft letter. They briefed both the house and the Senate. They want to have the ranking members and the chairman's of the sub committees to write a joint letter to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Have them take a look at what they are doing in Virginia and support the project at the Federal level. **VONAP**

Lisa Meunier, the analyst for the Startizon Corporation. Told the council that VA was eager to hear about Turbo Vet. The VA is facing a 240 day delay in processing the claims. The longer it takes to process the claim the more the chances that a veteran will come back and add things to the claim.

Mr. Leighty closed with saying that they are funded through phase two. They would like the JLC to ask the General Assembly to fund phase three.

JLC 2008 Legislative Objectives

Led by Chairman Sam Wilder

Fully fund the Department of Veterans Services Budget and Strategic Plan as outlined in Executive Order 19

Chairman Wilder would like to modify objective number one. A **motion** was passed by Mr. Ellis and seconded by Mr. Schneider to discuss the modifying of objective number one.

Chairman Wilder asked Mr. Leighty to get with DVS and write a one page position paper. The position papers have been critical and worth while.

Mr. Platt asked if they would put Turbo Vet at the top of the list. Mr. Wilder explained that they are no longer asking for personnel but for Turbo Vet phase three funding. Object number one will be modified to be more focused.

Mr. Rinaldo would like to know if everything else the JLC want is a done deal. Mr. Wilder said that they are eight people short. Mr. Rinaldo asked if the Governors Budget will go as is. Mr. Wilder said that the Budget is as is. A Legislative will have to put in a budget amending for Turbo Vet.

A **motion** was passed unamously to amend object number one as stated. Chairman Wilder will be attending the Board of Veteran Service meeting coming up and will ask for assist in putting in the necessary budget amendment to advocate for.

Support the Virginia National Guard

Chairman Wilder meet with General Newman and his joint staff to find out what the needs of the guard were. He also talked to Bob Simpson who said that the 5% cut is not hurting the National Guard. Talked to Steve Huxtable who is working the details of the guard and he said they have adequate money for the things that they need to do. There is nothing critical about supporting the National Guard.

On December 18, 2007 Chairman Wilder got with the GAG and LTC Russel_____ who said that they have a senator who is going to put in the necessary legislations. Chairman Wilder would like to eliminate objective number two. The JLC will still support the National Guard but it will not be one of the top priorities. A **motion** was made by Rinaldo and seconded by Platte to drop objective number two from the top JLC priority list. Mrs. Holbert would like to lower the priority instead of dropping the objective. Chairman Wilder would like the list to be shorter, but feels like it's not needed. Mr. Boyer said it sends a counter productive message if you lower the objective then take the objective out.

Don Kaiserman would like to just make a statement to says that the JLC have changed their position with the National Guard to a support role. A **motion** passed unanimously to eliminate objective number two.

Mr. Cooper would like to see a statement and not to have it eliminated .But change the wording. With no other motion the Chairman said the previous motion still carries.

Chairman Wilder clarified the priority list of the objectives. In August the National Guard was placed in the number two priority. It was also written contingent upon what the Governors Budget has.

Commissioner Burgess explained that the previous JLC legislative objectives that were handed out, priorities have been changed and should be explained.

Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care

Led by Martha Mead and David McGinnis

A Bill is being prepared but has not been submitted yet by Delegate Curt Cox. Promises were made to David Ellis from Senator Houk to patron a similar Bill on the Senate side.

Martha Mead explained that the Virginia is for Heroes is well attended and is helping with building a road map for the services that are need to treat combat stress and troops returning. The report on the conference will be out in early January. The proceedings of the conference is on the Virginia is for Heroes web site. Mrs. Mead meet with Delegate Cox on November 8, 2007 and he would like to also include individuals who have brain injuries. The previous concept paper has going under revision having been review by Del Cox, his legislative assistance, brain injury personnel, and additional comment s from the department of mental health. The major changes are to include the services for the National Guard, Reserve and active duty soldier returning home. In addition they included support for families. The mental health effects are stronger on the National guard families then other soldiers. They also added that they are partnering with the Department of Rehabilitated Services. Jim Rock Broth wants to be involved in the project. They also added how they would distribute the \$2 million in community services money, if they were to get it from the General Services. The money is a one time funding specifically for the services for post traumatic brain injuries. They would issue the money in a request for proposal. We would ask the seven mental health regions, to get together with the rehabilitated services in their community as well as the military bases to help develop how they would use these additional dollars to coordinate services in their community. \$2 million gives each regions \$275 thousand in funding. That will provide funding for two or three case managers and provide clinical services that focus on veteran issues.

Mrs. Mead explained that they are proposing is to hire an executive level director that will coordinate services and assisting service providers as well as with veteran service organizations and the chartable organizations. That person would have an administrative assistance.

Mrs. Mead reported that a lot of veterans that have post traumatic stress do not seek services. They do not recognize that there problem is a result of combat relates stress and they do not reach out. They do not realize that it not only affects them but also their family. They would like to coordinate the service in community; make sure they are taking advantage of veteran services. If not trying to assure the community service board knows about them and are monitoring them and helping veterans get some type of services. As this goes through the General Assembly there may be discussion about the salaries. What is presented on the annual state fund cost estimates are estimates and may change during budget negotiations. They are also proposing an outreach and public education program. \$200 thousand will include the schools, the communities and other

services that may know of families that are having problems. It will also be used to make a data system to keep track of individuals and the services that were given and if they worked. This will show the General Assembly the productivity of the program.

The clinical services said that if they were able to sponsor some clinical training where the folks from the VA and the DOD and the private sectors could get together.

The \$2 million would be distributed in the form of request proposal to the community for specifically providing the unmet need that is out there and that will continue to grow. As well as coordinating community services. The Hampton Community Services meet with Representative Scott and Representative Kennedy from Rhode Island and they are requesting specific programs where majority of the veteran service population is.

Mr. Rinaldo asked Mrs. Mead if the communities will be expected to fund the salaries of the case workers. Mrs. Mead explained that they are monitoring the number of bills in congress that would provide funding for the Wounded Warrior Mental Health program. The funds will be used to get the initial staff in place, but once the staff is in place they would have to bill the services. When the regions get together they are going to have to explain how they plan to keep services continuing with out the funding.

Mr. Kaiserman would like to know, have there been any noticeable reactions from the redeployed troops or the families becoming more open with problems. Mrs. Mead explained that she has heard stories being told. And she believes that it is making a difference but do not know that it is a significant difference.

Col McGinnis believes that it coming from the Commanders. The Hampton areas are now providing a large number of assistance to family members. There is resistance to provide services to active duty soldiers. There is still the stigma and active duty soldiers that will not come in. Mr. Kaiserman asked Mrs. Holbert what she has noticed on the Marine Corp side of things dealing with the stigma and soldiers not getting help. Mrs. Holbert believes that the Marines Corp active duty commander have taken an active stance on the issue of stigma on pre and post deployment and are letting the soldiers that it is ok to get help. An improvement has been made.

Mr. Cooper had a question about HIPPA, is tracking going to create an issue? Mrs. Mead explained that there may be some issues with HIPPA, but may not be issues if information being exchanged is between treating professionals. Other states are began to look at the use of a questionnaire and the questionnaire gives the department the and 180 days before they come back. The questionnaire gives DVA the permission to inquire on the soldiers behalf. That might help with the exchange of information and the HIPPA issues. They will do everything to HIPPA stay compliant.

Mr. McGinnis replied that he can exchange information with health care providers can exchange information but must sit for a briefing. The issue comes when you are dealing with non health care providers. HIPPA is not a barrier but a set of rules.

Mr. Cooper would like the group to consider- that looking awareness they have \$200 thousand and yet administrative expense is three times the amount.

Mrs. Mead response to Mr. Cooper is that the director and regional director are out there to let the region aware of the services. The public awareness budget is for the materials and for an information system. But she will look at the budget again.

Chairman Wilder said that awareness is part of it. The JLC has the ability to make a lot of people aware. Different organizations have programs but the position would bring all organizations together.

Mr. McGinnis said that out of the 42 million will not only benefits veterans but everyone. Focus is in two areas. Emergency services and case management. It is addressing yesterday and today problem. An increase in 25 thousand veterans in need who will need the services over the next 20 years. The family increment that the census uses then the number gets into the 75 thousand more consumers and the other social services that are not addressed in the 42 million dollars.

Mrs. Mead said that the 42 million for mental health services is focused on emergency services and case management. The emergency services is primarily for folks who come in thought commitment process, involuntary commitment process or the out patient commitment process. It is not indicating that the veterans would be a priority population for the Department of Mental Health. With this program the veterans would be the priority.

Mr. Schneider would like to see the JLC capture suicide prevention, to make that a vital part.

Mr. Jones advice is that they should go to the media to get the programs out. Have local newspaper put out an article. Mr. Rinaldo would like to caution the in terms of approaching the newspapers and the media. Some media may manipulate support.

Mrs. Mead said Dr. Hearld Cuttler has been a key advisor on the concept is the director of the mental help line for the VA. He can not take on a position because of the position he is currently in but will be present for the session as an expert witness. Mrs. Holbert will also be testifying at the sessions for the needs of the services.

Commissioner Burgess would like to say that Mrs. Mead has done an excellent job in bringing us to where we are today.

Chairman Wilder said the Del Cox is going to introduce and Bill Falang will touch bases with Senator Ed Houk and want the two bills to be the same. The JLC Chairman is required to by law to do a chairman s report by the end of December. The report was sent to every legislator and put the JLC objectives and the position papers. Make any changes that are necessary for this legislative objective. We are now at the DVS recommended 2.5 million. Our position paper is not accurate on the funding. On the position paper we asked for a million in federal funds and one million for the state and we are up to 3 million from the state. We ask for ½ million in private funding. The wording on the position paper needs to reflect the bigger number.

Mr. Rinaldo said that the position paper needs address the notion of specialness and different it from the other 42 million that is already there some how.

A **motion** was made by _____ and 2nd by Mr. Karnes to make the amendments as discussed.

Virginia War Memorial Education Center

Led By Harry Warner

Harry Warner report that the Virginia War Memorial Education Wing was named after Mr. Paul Galanti. He would like Educational center to be refer to as the Galanti Education Center and not the War Memorial Education Center.

Harry is please with what Governor Kaine has put out with support. The budget is \$8.1 million. The state to date has committed \$4 million 50 thousand over a three year period. The educational foundation raised \$2 million but still kept a gap of \$2 million. Gov. Kaine budget has 1million \$750 thousand in addition to the state commitment to \$5.8 million. The Governor made a commitment to put a granite wall in to honor the killed in action heroes. That t is considered up the additional \$250 thousand being raised. The private sector \$2.3 million and the state at \$5.8 million and total \$8.1 million for the budget. Private sect. \$910 thousand committed.

Mr. Kaiserman has been a huge help with MOAA , they have committed a little over \$13 thousand in donation. Dale Chapman American Legion has under taken the effort for \$100 thousand d from individuals and post across the state. VFW has a commitment of \$50 thousand and will be making a presentation on Jan 8. \$100 thousand commitments have been given by numerous community businesses.

Over 82% there with the budget and need to raise \$4 million. Would like to continue to ask for help and support from the JLC.

Mr. Galanti report that the education center is \$17 thousand square feet and carves into the hill. State agencies will be using it. The kids do not know history. Candi Shelton has family in the military and put together popular service training for teachers in the world.

Mr. Wilder said that \$20thousand visitor for 19 countries and 42 states visitors. It is not a Richmond deal but a state deal. The place honors veterans form all over the state and hope that other regions of the state can embrace it as well.

Vawarmemorial.org

Mr. Kaiserman believes that they veterans should be the ones who make it happen. He is asking all members of the JLC to make contributions. Over 70 ½ distribution on the IRA accounts. This year they can be taken as a tax deduction and that will reduce your net income. Available through December 31, 2007.

The Council took a break for lunch between 12:15pm and 12:50pm.

Virginia War Memorial Education Center

Led By Harry Warner

Chairman Wilder read the JLC objective number four, Virginia War Memorial Education Wing: “The JLC requests that the Governor and General Assembly release the \$3.5 million appropriated by the 2007 General Assembly for the construction of the Virginia War Memorial Education Wing, and that the Governor and General Assembly appropriate an additional \$2 million in General Funds for the construction of the Virginia War Memorial Education Wing.” Chairman Wilder explained that the wording is not applicable because the Governors Amendment to \$2.5 private funds and the \$5.7 in federal funds. The statement needs to be revised to reflect the Governors budget proposal.

Mr. Warner explained that in the October meeting the position of the War Memorial was to keep \$2 million in contingency because it became a fundraising urgency. That is not the goal anymore. The over all goal is the \$2.3 million. They are not faced with losing anything, but need to stay on track. Right now on planning and development phase for the drawings and should be completed in August. The state has contracted the Architect through March. The project is going to need additional funding to keep the architectural planning going.

Chairman Wilder asked if what he says impact the wording on the objective. Chairman Wilder and Mr. Warner both agreed that a new statement is need to reflect the Governors Budget. Commissioner Burgess explained that the money from the budget from 2009 to 2010 can not be released until July. If the money is moved to the Caboose Bill then they could allocate funds before July of 2008. Chairman Wilder explained that it is his understanding that none of the money will be released until the 2.5 in private funds are raised. Mr. Warner needs money to complete the planning phase of the project. Chairman Wilder is asking that MR. Warner and Mr. Combs come up with a new statement. Mr. Combs said that what they need is for the wording to ask for the release of a percentage of the funds, based on the private funds for planning. The rest of the funds can be released upon receiving the rest of the private funds.

The new statement for objective four is as follows: The JLC supports the funding levels proposed in the Governor’s Caboose Bill, but requests that the General Assembly modify the Governor’s proposed budget such that \$500,000 of the \$5,720,000 in state support be released upon certification that the War Memorial Education Foundation has secured \$1,000,000 in donations and/or pledges. The balance of the state funding (\$5,220,000) would be released after the War Memorial Education Foundation has secured the remaining \$1,250,000 in private funds. The purpose of the \$500,000 is to keep Education Center planning on its time line and to prevent further cost escalation.

A **motion** was made by Edwards, the decision was unanimous to remove the topic of discussion from the table.

A **motion** was made by Mr. Galanti and seconded by Mr. Jasper, the decision was unanimous to allow the statement to be in the position paper and the in the title.

Tax Relief for 100% Disabled Veterans

Delegate Scott Lingamfelter has put in a bill which only asks for tax relief for combat related disabilities. Chairman Wilder asked if there are any objectives to keep the initial statement which state service connected disabilities and not just combat related to receive tax relief. No one objected and the statement will remain as it is.

Provide Tax Relief for Virginia Citizen Soldiers called to Active Duty

Delegate Kline as agreed to sponsor the Bill. Chairman Wilder would like to have an expert prepared to talk about the issues. Chairman Wilder see no reason to change anything on the objection at this time.

Permit Virginia Resident Service Members to place a "Freeze: on their Credit Files"

Delegate Harvey Morgan has put in a Bill dealing with the issue. Chairman Wilder see no need to change the objectives wording at this time. Mr. Schneider would like o support the Objective but drop it from the priority list. A **motion** was made by Mr. Schneider and seconded by Mrs. Holbert to support the freeze on credit files for service members, but to take it off f of the top priority list. Fourteen of the members voted to take it off of the priority list and two voted to keep it on the list.

A **motion** was made by Chairman Wilder and seconded by Robert Gray to adopt the new priority list 1.Fully Fund the Turbo Vet 2. Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care, as briefed 3. Virginia War Memorial Education Wing 4. Tax Relief for 100% disabled veterans, as stated 5. Tax relief for Virginia Citizen Soldiers as preciously proposed.

A **motion** was made by Mr. Schneider and seconded by Mrs. Holbert to move Fully Funding Turbo Tax to priority number two or three and move Wounded Warrior Mental Health Care to priority number one.

Mr. Jasper would like to keep Turbo Vet as the number one priority. Mr. Hilgers explained that the legislative papers that were put out should not be changed. Instead the JLC should put the emphases where every they want o put it, but changing the priority list can discredit the JLC credibility. Mr. Martinez would like to also keep the priority list as written. He previously voted against changing the priority list, but would like to just shift the emphases.

Commissioner Burgess would like to do some talking points for the JLC. The talking points would make sure they all of the members are saying the same thing when speaking to legislators.

Mr. Jasper would like to say that most of the cases that have not been resolved are ht post traumatic Brian issues.

Chairman Wilder took a vote on who would like to stay with the original seven. Fourteen members voted to keep the objectives as previously written. Chairman Wilder said they the JLC will not reorganize the priority list.

Mr. Boyer would like to say that they prioritize the list before the Governors Budget. After reviewing the Governors Budget the JLC could say that the Governor supports the National Guard and there is already adequate legislation to support the credit freeze, so talk about the other objectives.

Mr. Townsley would like to keep the 2008 legislative objectives one through seven, but say it has been amended and to see the point paper.

Chairman Wilder asked for Mr. Combs to redraft the 2008 legislative objectives. The chairman made a **motion** which passed unanimously to keep the seven legislative objectives as listed, to amend the wording to objectives as previously stated, to agree that they are not in priority order, and to keep the same page.

Review of Meeting of November 28 re Fundraising for Wounded Warrior Mental Health

Led by Commissioner Burgess

Commissioner Burgess would like to discuss the meeting on November 28, 2007 which included the DVS director of policy and planning Steve Combs, BVS Chairman Paul Galanti, JLC Chairman Sam Wilder and DVS Development Coordinator Jack Hilgers. The minutes provided discuss fund raising for the Wounded Warrior initiative for private funding. It was determined that there should be a process for short term as well as a formal process for fund raising. BVS recommended that fundraising for the Wounded Warrior of Mental Health would be a good option.

Chairman Wilder said they are requesting federal funding, 3 million in state funding and ½ million in private funding. His question is how to get the money. At previous meeting the Chairman Wilder made the recommendation to make the chairman of the JLC an ex-officio member of the VSF and to make the Wounded Warrior Mental Health program a top priority for the VSF. No motion was made for either request. Legally the JLC Chairman has no stand on the committee. So he can not make any motions during the meeting. Chairman Wilder is requesting the council to authorize the Chairman, of the JLC to make a **motion** that the board of VSF make the Wounded Warrior Mental Health program their top priority objective for fundraising. A **motion** was made by Mr. Platt and seconded by Commissioner Burgess, which passed unanimously to make the top priority of the VSF be the Wounded Warrior Mental Health program fundraising.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Education Center: Presentation

Led by Anya Harris

Mrs. Anya Harris briefed everyone on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Education Center. Each person present was given a packet containing information from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. The center wants to remember those who have given their lives in the Americas military wars and conflicts. The center will be an underground educational center where visitors will learn the importance of the memorial. The facility's groundbreaking is expected to take place in 2010.

Mrs. Harris's presentation showed how the new facility will look when completed. The center will have a wall of faces that will have photos of veterans whose name appears on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. A rolling wall will include over a 100 thousand items that people have left at the wall for their loved ones. The center will cover all wars including the present military conflicts. A resource center will include exhibits and areas where in-depth information, can be found

Mr. Jasper told his story about being a company Commander. His company was hit by a reinforced battalion. His Company had 25 wounded and 10 killed in action. To keep his soldiers in memory he has purchased bricks for his soldier Melvin Reynolds and Jeffery Mole at the Marine Museum and will later purchase bricks for other fallen soldiers.

JLC Storming the Hill

Led by Jack Hilgers

Mr. Hilgers handed out legislative information on "How a Bill Becomes a Law" and "The Virginia General Assembly pocket glossary of legislative terms". Mr. Hilgers also provided a map to show where public parking is available and the rates of the garages, which will be near the meeting. John Hatfield has offered to accommodate parking.

The meeting will be January 14, 2008 in the west conference room in the fifth floor General Assembly building. Co-patron forms will be available for legislators to sign. Confirmation was given by Senators Jon Edwards, Frank Wagner, Rick Boucher, and Robert Scott on attending the event. Confirmation was also given by Delegates Kirkland Cox, William Janis, John Crosgrove and Terrie Suit.

Mr. Wilder said that he wants this event to help spread the word of who the JLC is. The event would be an awareness and public relations event. Chairman Wilder said that it would be a good idea to call legislators in advance and try to set up appointments to speak with them. Mr. Hilgers would like all attending to wear the yellow badges and not the blue badges, due to how visible they will be against a blue blazer.

Town Hall Meeting

Led by Commissioner Vince Burgess

Commissioner Burgess would like to propose five town hall meetings. Veterans will be allowed to speak to a person and have someone listen to them. Commissioner Burgess feels as if the JLC would be a good partnership with the DVS in hosting the function. The areas where the meeting would be held are Harrisonburg, Quantico, Abingdon, Richmond, Roanoke, and Tidewater, or close to the cities listed.

A **motion** was made by Mr. Schneider and seconded by Mr. Jasper, to partnership with the JLC in identify a location, promoting the meetings and having a JLC member present to host the meetings with DVS, and passed unanimously.

Mrs. Freeman asked Commissioner Burgess how many people will be attending the meetings. The Commissioner replied that about 30- 35 individuals were present last year. DVS has also invited the National Guard, Veterans Affairs and other local Veteran Service organizations in the community. The Commissioner plans to do a news release to inform the public on the meeting.

Department of Veterans Services Initiatives

Led by Commissioner Vince Burgess

The Commissioner sent out a briefing on the hurdles that must be crossed before DVS can open the Sitter Barfoot Care Center, and start accepting private pay patients and Medicare Patients. One of the current problems is implementing the state patient billing system. The Department of Health has to visit the facility and review the policies and procedures, which could take up to 30 days. The projected date to start accepting private pay patients is the week of the Jan. 7. The Fire Marshall has reviewed all corrected deficiencies and has given his approval. The Commissioner would like to apologize to the Veterans for the delayed opening of the care center. He would have liked to see the center open right after the dedication ceremony but that was not the case.

Preparation for next meeting

Led by Chairman Sam Wilder

Chairman Wilder has provided the JLC with a list of meeting dates between January to December of 2008:

- Monday January 14 (Day on the Hill)
- Thursday March 13
- Wednesday May 14
- Wednesday August 13 (2009 Legislative Objectives to be decided)
- Wednesday October 15
- Thursday December 18

Chairman Wilder would like to thank everyone who took the time and effort to research the objectives. A **motion** was made by _____ and seconded by Mr. Jasper, and a unanimous decision was made to carry with the dates that were proposed for the 2008 meeting schedule.

Chairman's Report: Veterans Service Foundation

Led by Commissioner Burgess

Commissioner Burgess handed out comments from the chairman of the Veterans Service Foundation for the JLC to review. Mr. Wickersham, Chairman of the VSF, would like to apologize for not being able to present at this JLC meeting.

Public Comment Period

There was no public comment.

Mrs. Holbert would like to have photographic support for the town hall meetings, storming the hill and post the photos to the website, so that people can put a face to the JLC. Her goal is to expand the visibility of the Joint Leadership Council. Commissioner Burgess replied that he will

have Anne Atkins, Director of Communication for the DVS, to get with Mrs. Holbert and come up with a way to present the photos.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairman Wilder called for a motion to adjourn. A **motion** was made by many members, and a unanimous decision was made to close the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.